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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0066
INFO GCC COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 003338

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TAGS: PREL PTER AF KU
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN'S FUTURE - AND UBL SPEECH

REF: A. STATE 192153 B. STATE 190913

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR RICHARD H. JONES,
REASON: 1.5 (B) AND (D).

SUMMARY

¶ 1. (S) USAMA BIN LADEN'S NOVEMBER 3 STATEMENT WAS THE SPEECH OF A DESPERATE MAN DISAPPOINTED THAT HIS PREVIOUS STATEMENTS HAD NOT GENERATED GREATER SUPPORT IN THE MUSLIM WORLD, KUWAIT MFA
UNDERSECRETARY AL-JARALLAH TOLD THE AMBASSADOR NOVEMBER 4. AL-JARALLAH DID NOT EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF MILITARY OPERATIONS CONTINUING DURING RAMADAN, NOTING THAT THE AFGHANIS THEMSELVES HAD NOT RESPECTED RAMADAN WHEN FIGHTING AMONG THEMSELVES. HE REAFFIRMED KUWAITI - AND GCC - SUPPORT FOR REACHING OUR COMMON GOAL -- THE END FOR THE TALABAN, UBL, AND AL-QAIDA.

AFGHANISTAN: GCC COUNTRIES STAND WITH US

¶ 2. (S) THE AMBASSADOR DREW EXTENSIVELY FROM REF A IN A DISCUSSION ON AFGHANISTAN NOVEMBER 4 WITH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS UNDERSECRETARY KHALID AL-JARALLAH. AL-JARALLAH, EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR THE BRIEFING, AGREED THAT THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN PRESENTED DIFFICULT CHALLENGES. IT POSED A THREAT NOT ONLY FOR WESTERN COUNTRIES, HE SAID, BUT ALSO COUNTRIES IN THIS REGION. THE COUNTRIES OF THE GCC, HE ADDED, ARE READY TO WORK TOGETHER WITH THE U.S., THE U.K., AND THE COALITION TO REACH OUR COMMON GOAL - THE END FOR THE TALABAN, USAMA BIN LADEN, AND AL-QAIDA.

UBL SPEECH: SIGN OF DESPERATION

¶ 3. (S) AL-JARALLAH RAISED THE SPEECH BY USAMA BIN LADEN BROADCAST THE EVENING BEFORE. IT WAS A VERY STRANGE SPEECH, HE SAID. IN HIS ASSESSMENT, IT WAS A SPEECH OF A DESPERATE MAN. WHEN UBL USED THE EXPRESSION "WA ISLAMA" (AN EXPRESSION USED BY MUSLIMS NEEDING HELP IN TOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES), IT INDICATED THAT HE WAS FEELING DEEPLY DEPRESSED.

¶ 4. (S) ELABORATING, AL-JARALLAH SAID THAT HE THOUGHT UBL HAD EXPECTED THAT HIS FIRST SPEECH AFTER THE BOMBING BEGAN (WITH AL-QAIDA SPOKESMAN BU GAITH AT HIS SIDE) WOULD CREATE A STRONG SPIRIT OF SUPPORT IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD. IN FACT, THERE HAS BEEN VERY LITTLE REACTION. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME DEMONSTRATIONS IN PAKISTAN, BUT THEY HAVE BEEN SMALLER THAN EXPECTED AND APPARENTLY DECREASING, AND THERE HAVE BEEN SOME POPULAR EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT IN PLACES LIKE INDONESIA. OVERALL, HOWEVER, THE REACTION HAS BEEN MINIMAL. BECAUSE OF THIS, UBL IS DISAPPOINTED AND DESPERATE, AL-JARALLAH SAID.

15. (S) THE AMBASSADOR THANKED AL-JARALLAH FOR HIS INSIGHT AND NOTED THAT PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY PROMINENT KUWAITIS -- EITHER FROM INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT, THE EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS, OR THE PRIVATE SECTOR -- REFUTING UBL'S ALLEGATIONS WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL IN OUR EFFORTS TO REFUTE UBL PROPAGANDA.

RAMADAN OPERATIONS: KUWAIT NOT CONCERNED

15. (S) AL-JARALLAH RESPONDED CALMLY TO THE POINT REGARDING THE HIGH PROBABILITY THAT THE MILITARY CAMPAIGN WOULD CONTINUE THROUGH RAMADAN. HE DID NOT THINK THIS SHOULD BE A SOURCE OF UNDUE CONCERN. OBSERVING THAT SOME 30,000 AFGHANIS HAD DIED IN AFGHAN INTERNAL FIGHTING, HE NOTED THAT THE AFGHANIS HAD NOT RESPECTED RAMADAN WHEN THEY WERE FIGHTING AMONG THEMSELVES.

NORTHERN ALLIANCE READY TO MOVE?

16. (S) AL-JARALLAH NOTED NEWS REPORTS OF B-52 BOMBING NEAR NORTHERN ALLIANCE FRONT LINES OVER THE PAST TWO-THREE DAYS, AND THOUGHT THERE MIGHT BE A GOOD CHANCE THAT THE NORTHERN ALLIANCE WOULD BE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD SOON AND "ACHIEVE SOMETHING." THE AMBASSADOR AGREED RECENT NEWS REPORTS WERE MORE ENCOURAGING BUT STRESSED IT WAS TOO SOON TO MAKE PREDICTIONS.

JONES